# **Frequently Asked Questions**

Blue Earth County Public Works Facility



### 1 What determined the current site plan layout?

Thought and consideration were given to multiple factors as it related to building placements on the site.

For safety and traffic control, the traffic flow of the County tandem trucks is channeled out of the north side of the site, and then west to the intersection of 200th Street and CSAH 16 at a stop sign, in lieu of access directly from CSAH 16. With that in mind, the parking portion of the building faces north so that tandem trucks can leave and enter the north side of the site and fuel up as they enter and exit the site.

It was important to place the vehicle maintenance bays south facing to take advantage of the sun for snow melt, as well as to point the activity in these spaces south and away from residential areas to the north. The office space is on the southwest corner of the building and will take advantage of the southern and western sun exposure and will act as a buffer between the west-facing properties and the maintenance bay activities.

The stormwater pond, along with landscaping to the north, the main building structure itself, and the remote unheated storage building were placed with the intention to buffer County activity that will take place south of the building and near the salt storage shed.

### 2 Will the building and the site have an industrialized feel?

The site layout and landscape plan are being developed to bring in vegetation that includes natural prairie restoration mix, a diverse tree buffer screen, and a stormwater pond with a natural pond buffer seed mix. Overall, site plantings are intended to bring a natural, well maintained, green, and harmonious site to the area.

The buildings are planned to be constructed with earthtone colors. The main building structure is currently proposed as a precast building that uses colored concrete with aggregate and banding that will create a professional and clean-looking structure.

#### 3 Will truck and vehicular activity impact the neighborhood?

- This segment of CSAH 16 (Stoltzman Road) has a 2018 traffic volume of 2,000 average daily traffic
- The County anticipates averaging approximately 120 daily passenger vehicle trips and 60 daily tandem truck, motor-grader, or other heavy commercial vehicle trips in or out daily
- The estimated combined daily additional passenger vehicle and heavy commercial vehicle trips
  will result in an approximately 9% traffic volume increase on a road capable of up to 10,000 average
  daily traffic
- These trips are generally staggered throughout the day, with crews leaving the site as operations begin in the morning and returning at the end of the work day
- The majority of the truck and heavy equipment traffic will exit the site and head south on Stoltzman Road

### 4

#### What are operating hours of facility?

During the summer, the County facility is in operation weekdays from 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. In the winter, the facility is in operation weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. During more significant winter weather events, snow plowing equipment may begin work at 4:30 a.m. and can go until 7:00 p.m., depending on the severity or timing of the snow and ice event. Operation at the facility outside of these hours is very rare and is generally dependent on emergency or storm-related responses.

### 5

## What level of sound will take place at the operation, and how is that controlled?

The facility will primarily have tandem trucks, motor graders, and loaders operated on the grounds as the vehicles enter and exit the site. Additionally, there will occasionally be vehicle back-up alarms if the equipment is working with materials or a truck is being loaded.

Calculations were performed using typical decibel ratings for standard back-up alarms. Sound levels drop approximately 6 decibels per doubling of distance. The nearest residential homes to the west and the north are approximately 650 feet to the area south of the main building, where occasional back-up alarms will be used. The sound level is estimated to be 34 decibels by the time it reaches the residences. This estimate does not consider items that will buffer sound, including the buildings, landscaping, and trees. For reference, a decibel comparison chart is provided.

It is important to note that the current Public Works Facility on Map Drive is surrounded on three sides of the property by townhomes and single-family residences ranging from 25 feet to 60 feet from the County property. The County has been mindful of its operations in order to be a good neighbor and has had little to no complaints registered by neighboring residents. See photo below for reference.



### DECIBEL (LOUDNESS) COMPARISON CART

	180	Rocket Launch
Very Loud	170	Shotgun Blast
	160	Fire Works
	150	Jet Engine
	140	Rock Concert
	130	Jack Hammer
	120	Ambulance Siren
Loud	110	Chainsaw/Jetski
	100	Motorcycle/Subway
	90	Loud Traffic
	80	Hair Dryer
	70	Vacuum Cleaner
Quiet	60	Normal Conversation
	50	Dishwasher
	40	Quiet Office
	30	Whisper
Faint	20	Leaves Rustling
	10	Normal Breathing

Decibels dB

80dB = level at which sustained exposure may result in hearing loss



Is dust a concern with any of the operations, and how is that controlled by the County?

The site will be paved in areas where vehicles will routinely operate, as shown on the site plans. The County plans to pave the portion of 200th Street from Stoltzman Road to its driveway to improve the roadway, meet its needs, and eliminate dust. The County does not anticipate its tandem trucks will use 200th Street east of its driveway.

- What type of utility extensions are planned for the facility?
  - Fiber extension
  - City water service
  - City sanitary sewer service
  - Storm water management pond to meet Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and City of Mankato (City) requirements
- 8 Is there any planned annexation of residential properties along the route of the utility extensions?

There is not any planned annexation of residential properties as a result of the County's project. The orderly annexation agreement between Mankato Township and the City governs annexation and is not changed as a result of the County's project.

Is there any planned assessment to property owners along the path of the utility extensions?

The extension of utilities may result in the City issuing a deferred assessment on some properties. City staff will be asked to attend a future neighborhood meeting to address this further.

- What are some of the benefits to the community and neighborhood?
  - Increased access to Highway 90 corridor with improved snow and ice control coverage
  - Government-type facility constructed with high-quality aesthetic standards and great continued grounds upkeep
  - Increase in County law enforcement in the area due to the facility's fueling station, which is used by law enforcement
  - County buildings with increased energy management systems, including possible LED lighting and flat-roof solar panels
  - Consideration to south approach speed reduction benefits of building and driveway
  - Extension of fiber line to the facility and area
- What will the County do with the remaining land located east of the proposed Public Works Facility?

At this time, the most likely use will continue to be agriculture.



